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ABSTRACT

The concept of place identity is a theoretical necessity for understanding the impact of the urban environment on the individual. Place identity refers to clusters of perceptions in the form of images, memories, facts, ideas, beliefs, values, and behavior tendencies relevant to the individual's existence in the physical world. These clusters are related to the development of self-identity, which is largely a product of socialization. Coping in an urban setting requires socialization in the physical world at any number of periods during the life cycle. The urban environment comprises diverse physical settings, and place identity associated with different settings provides norms and values that regulate behavior patterns in given milieus. Thus, the individual behaves and interacts in certain ways in settings that involve crowding, privacy, and territoriality. Place identity is both enduring and changing. Enduring family/household influences often determine what happens when the child becomes an adult, while the changing character of place identity, mainly due to technology and demographic patterns, may explain changes in self-identity. In urban environments, the place identity concept becomes significant in that place identity associated with inadequate home settings may be compensated for by place identity associated with the superior quality of school and neighborhood settings. (Author/MJL)

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PLACE-IDENTITY IN URBAN SETTINGS

Harold M. Proshansky*

Graduate School and University Center

City University of New York

INTRODUCTION

As some of you may know, I have been a university administrator for some time now. I am sure that Irwin Altman, your other Keynote Speaker and now a University Dean, will agree that it is much, much harder to do research and write scholarly papers when one also carries the burden of university administration. However, the invitation to come to this Congress was tempting to resist, and now that I have finished my paper and I am here, I am happy I gave in to the temptation. The academic realm of research, scholarly ideas, and theoretical analysis is infinitely more fun than the administrative realm of budgets, student enrollments, and student stipends. So let me enter the realm of theory and research immediately.

My presentation today is concerned with theoretical conceptualization and not research. The conceptualization was evolved in collaboration with two of my doctoral student colleagues, Robert Kaminoff and Abbe Fabian, and in this discussion I will only touch on part of it. As the title of this presentation indicates, our primary interest is in place-identity, and in particular in relation to urban settings. For this reason we should make it clear to you from the beginning what we mean by place-identity.

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*A more detailed version of the theoretical conception presented here, as well as other aspects of the theory, are presented in a paper authored by myself and my colleagues, Kaminoff and Fabian, which will soon be published. Reprints of this paper will be sent to those writing to me, when they are available.

We do not mean "place-belongingness" or "strong emotional attachment to" or "identifying with" one's home, neighborhood, family setting, or hometown. This is much more the meaning of the term when used--with a considerable emphasis on the phenomenology or experienced nature of the identity or attachment--by Cooper ( ), Relph ( ), Tuan ( ), and to a lesser extent Buttimer ( ). On the other hand, we do not dispute the relevance or importance of the more specific phenomenon they refer to, nor to the fact that they have identified it as place-identity. We prefer to designate it as "place-belongingness," and, as you will soon see, conceive of it as a particular focused expression of our broader conception of place-identity.

By place-identity we mean clusters of cognitions in the form of images, memories, facts, ideas, beliefs, values, and behavior tendencies relevant and directly related to the physical world existence of the individual. These cognitions relate not only to the environmental past and present, but no less so to the environmental future of the person, that is, his expectancies, hopes, and dreams. If you have any doubt that such clusters of cognitions exist, then use yourself as the respondent. You will be amazed by what you carry around in your head on a conscious level about your physical world. It's all of these: memories of past settings, beliefs about spaces and places, aesthetic preferences, norms about the use of given settings, locations of given space, ad infinitum.

We believe that these many, many clusters of cognitions constitute the place-identity of the individual because existing self theory leads one to deduce that they are intimately and closely tied to the emergence, growth, and development of the person's self-identity. Most self theorists conceive of self-identity as the person's experienced sense of continuity as a unique being because of the social attributes,

social roles, interpersonal relationships and social activities that circumscribe his existence and thereby define who and what he is both to himself and others. It follows, therefore, that if self-identity evolves over time as a consequence of these socialization processes and events, then it must also be true that the spaces and places involved in every one of these social definitions of the person must also serve to shape, develop, maintain, and protect his self-identity. There is no social environment that is not also a physical environment, and in effect people define themselves to themselves and to others in physical world as well as social world terms.

However, the theoretical significance of place-identity for the However, environmental psychologist, lies as much in the nature of this environment in a complex industrial society, as it does in its logical derivation from self-identity theory. The very essence of such a society is the urban built environment, an environment characterized much more by increasingly rapid change than by the enduring nature of many of its properties over long periods of time. The changes, of course, carried under the shibboleth of technological progress in the service of providing the greatest good for the greatest number of people, have led us to increasingly larger, complex and diverse physical environments we refer to as urban settings.

Such is the world that we grew up in and our children are growing up in and, barring a nuclear holocaust, continuing urbanization of that world shows no real signs of slowing down for the generations to come. Indeed every indication--given telecommunication and the computer--is that such development is accelerating each decade. But let us stay with the present. Just consider the present day existence of the urban dweller insofar as the diversity, complexity, and variability

of the physical world he must deal with. If you then add to this the unassailable fact that he is, whatever else, as a human being, the epitome of cognitive organisms, then the concept of place-identity as we have defined it here is a theoretical necessity if we are to understand the impact of the urban built environment on the individual.

Again, I ask you to use yourself as an introspective respondent and review your physical world existence in a typical day. Don't leave anything out: be as detailed as you can. The range, diversity and complexity of your cognitions, which will necessarily include images, memories, ideas, beliefs, behavior tendencies, and values, will astound you--and, of course, the "cognitive data bank" you will provide will necessarily be limited to the conscious level of your place-identity. The conclusion the environmental psychologist must come to is simple enough. To endure life in a modern urban setting requires an intensive and sustained physical world socialization of the individual at any number of periods during the course of his life-cycle, involving many events and experiences in these respects which are unpredictable, as well as those consistent with expectation.

If we can derive ways to study place-identity as we have defined it in this paper, we should in time learn a great deal about this kind of socialization process and its relationship to establishing, maintaining, and supporting the self-identity of the person. It is also my firm belief that such study of place-identity--again assuming an appropriate methodology--will tell us a great deal about the physical world of urban life insofar as its unintended consequences on the sociopsychological development of the person. As we have learned again and again, modern urban life--not unlike medical drug therapies--for all of its technological achievements in

satisfying human needs and beyond that, has produced its share of "side-effects," that is, unintended, undesirable consequences. The study of place-identity may tell us a great deal more about these side effects than we now know.

I need only point out to this group that the problems that environmental psychologists are asked to address are just these side effects of urban life. We are speaking about crowding, air pollution, urban decay, neighborhood conflicts and territoriality, noise pollution, space and job stress, invasions of privacy, and many others. What should be stressed is that these problems of the city are not abstractions that vaguely touch the life of the urban resident. They are experienced on a day-to-day basis in the existence of the person within and across many of the physical settings he moves in and out of in the course of his daily routine.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE COGNITIONS OF PLACE-IDENTITY

Our discussion up to this point of the substantive nature or content of place-identity cognitions has been at a general level. Surely no one has to be convinced that the individual has images, memories, ideas, and beliefs about his environmental present and past. Places now being used or that have been used can be described at many levels--from physical dimensions, to design, distances, colors, and so on, including what went on in these spaces, for what purposes, and with whom. The person not only draws on the cognitive cluster of his present apartment, for example, but if asked about the one that was left a few years before, that cognitive cluster will also be available, although surely not as clearly with many aspects forgotten. However, there is much more involved than what places

look like, what they were used for, and what happened there. It is important for purposes of analysis to identify three other types of components in a cluster of cognitions.

To begin with, one not only knows or remembers a given setting and what went on in it, but involved in those cognitions are the norms, appropriate behaviors, values, specific uses and purposes of the setting. In effect, since every physical setting is inextricably also a social setting, our cognitions or images and memories of given physical settings carry with them the normative definition of the setting insofar as what people engaging in what activities, at what time and for what purposes. In pointing to these types of cognitions we do not mean a set of abstractions or formal statements regarding, for example, the definitions of apartment living. Many individuals indeed may be able to recite these definitions, but the significant cognitions in this respect are those that are tied to the specific setting or settings, past or present, that the individual experienced. He can tell you what the "rules and regulations" for that apartment were; what was and was not possible in it; whether its general and specific purposes were met; what happened to its particular normative behavioral patterns as his grown children moved out or moved back in, or when their grandparents came to live with them, or even when new kinds of neighbors moved in and replaced those of long standing.

We are, of course, speaking not only of apartments, but also of the variety of other urban settings used by all of us on a daily basis: The family household, the residential site and neighborhood, the local school or commuter college, the work

or employment setting, the recreation, shopping and social activity settings and, finally, all the public space settings including transportation devices as well as streets, sidewalks, and bridges that connect these diverse physical settings. In a given day the person routinely moves from one of these settings to the next and back, and in each one of them are sub-settings which serve specific functions, for specific purposes involving individuals in defined social relationships for these functions and purposes. One need only think of the child's playroom, or the family dining room, or the father's den in a household setting as examples. However, life in any urban setting is neither static nor always predictable. Because human beings are goal-oriented and affective organisms as well as cognitive ones, their relationships to each other in an environment subject to change, can only be described as variable as well as stable.

What this suggests is still another aspect of the clusters of cognitions we have identified as place-identity. Inherent in the behavioral, normative, and attitude-value cognitions of specific settings which we emphasized above, are just those person/physical setting relationships that have emerged as critical environmental problems of urban life in general, and specifically for the various settings that dominate this life, e.g. household, school, neighborhood, workplace, etc. We are, of course, referring to crowding, invasions of privacy, intrusions into personal space, and conflicts in territoriality.

The point to be stressed is that for all urban settings that the individual uses in his day-to-day existence, his cognitions of these settings include not only the general norms for, say privacy, but more specifically how they apply in this setting, what he must do to satisfy the related needs involved, what are the conditions that interfere with satisfying these needs, and so on. For other settings there are still

other privacy cognitions, and if we think of still another problem, such as crowding, the clusters are indeed "dense" with beliefs, ideas, norms, appropriate behaviors, and, for want of a better term, what we call "non-verbal strategic social interactions". We all learn over time where, when, and how crowds occur in a given setting, how to avoid them, and, if we can't, then how to manage them, and if not that, then how to adjust to them or escape from them.

We would like to digress for just a moment in our discussion of the substantive nature of place-identity. Problems of privacy, personal space, crowding, and territoriality are not limited to urban settings.

It can be said, that to a degree, each one of these person/physical setting relationships has a universal cast to it by virtue of the fact that it is rooted in the biological and physical nature of human beings. The fact that each of us is an object with space-occupying physical dimensions, and also has the capacity to sense and feel, makes it evident that crowding and personal space can almost by definition emerge as human problems. To be an object of this kind means that no two of us can occupy the exact same space at the same time. Nor should we ignore the cogent fact that the human organism requires some minimal space for movements in order to avoid muscle discomfort and to satisfy basic needs, e.g., breathing. Finally, it becomes evident that in the matter of privacy certainly the newborn infant, and to a lesser degree the adult, requires some minimal degree of freedom from stimulation of any kind, e.g. other people, noise, etc., in order to rest and/or sleep enough for the human organism to survive.

Finally, we consider now still another type of cognition that is woven into the cognitive fabric we have defined as place-identity. The complex process of the physical world socialization of the person in an urban setting, requires that he learn to understand this setting both generally and in terms of specific settings; that he be competent in using it whether in a room, workplace, or moving through the city; and finally, that he be resourceful when his usual competence is challenged by unexpected changes and unpredictable environmental events. We have designated these three classes of skills as environmental understanding, environmental competence, and environmental resourcefulness.

What should be stressed is that while urban dwellers may learn these skills generally--as they move up and back through the kaledioscope of physical settings--the specifics of these skills, that is, particular expressions of them in the form of behavior tendencies are also learned for specific settings and become part of the cognitive clusters that apply to each of these settings. Thus, the person develops skills of understanding, competence, and resourcefulness in living in a crowded household, in getting to work every day, in moving through a crowded school, in knowing how to achieve privacy and maintain it against intrusions in an open-space work setting, in riding crowded and noisy subway trains, in driving in crowded and congested automobile traffic, and in many, many more situations.

Place-identity then is not only a matter of the images, likes, beliefs, and values, and the rules and regulations of a physical setting, but also the particular patterns of understanding, competence, and resource skills the person has developed with respect to it. In many instances individuals have a repertoire of such skills that apply to a given or type of setting and they can in some instances tell you about them. In most settings it is far more likely that the person is unaware of all that goes on in his use of such space and can't describe his skill repertoire and its history.

However, when entering new and difficult physical settings or when a familiar physical setting is undergoing radical changes, that is, at the time "new learning" is in order, the person's understanding, competence, and resource skills become far more salient for him and, therefore, he may be better able to some degree to give you his own account of them. Of one thing we can be certain, and that is that apart from the new or changing physical setting, the individual's specific environmental skills undoubtedly vary from one type of physical context, say the employment setting compared to the public space setting. Physical settings vary in their complexity, goals, and resources and therefore they must also vary in the extent to which they make demands on the person's understanding, competence, and resourcefulness. It is evident that the environmental skills of understanding, competence, and resourcefulness are interrelated and have

consequences for each other. The person who easily "reads" a physical setting that is changing is more likely to develop new competencies required in using it and in general be more resourceful in "overcoming" the changes to his advantage.

One final note about the nature of the system of clusters of cognitions that we have identified as place-identity. The individual defines himself not only in terms of desirable or required spaces and places that support and maintain his self-identity, but the latter is also accomplished via negative cognitions. Place-identity cognitions, in effect, may have positive, neutral, or negative valences. We learn the "don'ts" and "dangers" of spaces and places: crossing a dangerous boulevard against the lights; sitting on the sill of an open window, riding up a self-service elevator in a crime-ridden community late at night; having one's bedroom face a main traffic road; playing one's radio very loud, if at all, after midnight; household bathrooms without a lock on the door; and so on.

These "don'ts" may also involve particular settings in which for any number of reasons the experiences of the person in relation to its purposes, activities, or interactions with relevant others have been negative, so the setting itself--either in whole or in part--in the place-identity of the person may be a cluster of cognitions most of which are negatively valenced. Whether it's the negative physical properties of a physical setting, or the consequences of such environmental phenomena as crowding, intrusions of personal space, invasions of privacy, or conflicts over territoriality, or even the inadequacies of our environmental skills in dealing with spaces and places, among the clusters of cognitions that define the individual's place identity and thereby support and maintain his self-identity are those that have an anxiety and defense function. While some define support and maintain this self-identity directly in positive

terms, other cognitions signal danger and thereby arouse anxiety and related defensive responses to nullify these "external" threats to self-identity.

SOME STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF PLACE IDENTITY

What of the structural characteristics of place-identity? Since it is not unlike other cognitive structures identified by psychologists, e.g. interracial attitudes, it shares most if not all of the same properties, most of which need no discussion here. The places and spaces involved and all that is associated with them are, for example, representations of reality and by no means perfect ones; the cognitions are often stylized and subject to "decay" over time, with reality elements of these cognitions often missing or distorted or are erroneously combined. In the present discussion I would like to focus on just three structural properties of place-identity which, in my judgment, are of very special importance to the environmental psychologist.

To begin with, place identity, clearly like self-identity itself, is both an enduring cognitive system and one that changes during the course of the entire life cycle. Personality theorists have stressed the stability and enduringness of the individual's self-identity, giving far, far less attention to its capacity to change. This kind of theoretical neglect is not one the environmental psychologist can afford to ignore if, indeed, we are going to solve complex environmental problems. There is no question that during the formative years of the life-cycle, there evolves enduring characteristics of place-identity that serve to establish and maintain the self-identity of the person.

However, even these characteristics are subject to change over the course of the life-cycle, and more importantly, during the remainder of the life-cycle new place-identity characteristics emerge in the service of self-identity development, while others recede in their significance and salience. The reason is simple enough.

Some social roles and social categories diminish in importance while others or even new ones emerge as very important in defining who and what the person is. With these changes come changes in the importance of various physical settings as significant for the place-identity of the person. No one can deny, for example, the significance of the young adult role during the 18 to 35 year age period, and its inextricable relationship to the development of the individual's occupational or professional role. We need only to talk to a machinists, a small business entrepreneur, a doctor, a dentist, a lawyer, or a corporation executive, and we will learn a great deal about their occupation-related spaces and places; the latter not only serve in very significant ways to define their occupational role, but in so doing also defines who each of them is as a distinct person.

We would to suggest to the reader that the phenomenon of <u>place-belongingness</u>, identified most often with strong emotional attachments in adults to their childhood family household, reflects both the "formative years" and "enduringness" bias in theoretical discussions of self-identity in relation to physical settings. We do not deny the importance of early childhood in establishing both self-identity and place-identity characteristics that may endure for a lifetime. However, other powerful influences may occur which over time and accompanied with changes in the roles the person must play, may have a critical impact on self-identity and related place-identity cognitions. For example, if the child has a strong sense of place-belongingness for the family during and after he leaves it as a

young adult, what happens when he becomes a parent. In this adult role he now rears his own children in his own family setting over an extended period of time, deriving all the physical space satisfactions that accompany caring for and nurturing one's own children. This may explain why place belongingness at its extreme is often associated with the very traditional nuclear family in which generations of the same family--grandparents, parents, and children--have lived together and successively in the "old family home," or so close to it that the households of the various generations were psychologically equivalent despite variations in geographical locus.

The changing character of place-identity is the result of more than just the consequence of the changing nature of existing life-long roles, such as sex, or the emergence of new ones, such as occupation, unexpected events, sudden changes, and the diversity of the context that engenders those changes are the rule rather than the exception. Role relationships and the existing roles that people play change because other people die, get divorced, become seriously ill, lose their jobs, suddenly fail financially in their economic endeavors, have windfalls, break the law and get caught, change careers, and so on and on. In each instance role changes may occur, and even without them disruptions in existing physical settings and the need to readjust to these changed settings can as a consequence lead to changes in the self-identity of the person.

That some aspects of self-identity may undergo change is a very reasonable assumption to make, and with that it is just as safe to assume that changes in some of the cluster of cognitions that define the place-identity also occur. Clearly, stress is engendered by marriages that terminate in divorce with roles changing

from married to being "single" and retaining (or not retaining) the role of parent. This stress is tied, of course, to personal conflict and loss of self-esteem, but no less is the role shifting that is required than the accompanying physical settings changes that take place under these conditions, e.g., the "single" father who now lives alone, the divorced mother who must run the same family household but without a husband or father present, and so on.

Finally, let us not overlook the changes that begin at the other end, so to speak. As we have already suggested, the physical and social environments in a highly complex industrialized, urban society, are not only complex, but also subject to rapidly accelerating changes. To put the matter simply, modern technology both directly and indirectly through its impact on physical settings and their related social roles, has had and continues to have a strong influence on the place-identity of the individual. The physician's image of his bedside manner is a thing of the past, at least in most large urban settings. In a sense "the bedside" has disappeared since doctors seldom make house calls, and in the hospital setting there are not only all kinds of paraphernalia at the bedside which substitute for the doctor, but the single doctor has been replaced by a battery of medical personnel that either en masse or singly take turns tending the patient, i.e., the physician, the resident, or the intern.

In general, the place-identity of the urban dweller over a period of a generation or so reflects significant shifts in content because of startling breakthroughs in information gathering and presentation, long-distance communication and transportation, and in eliminating tedious and unnecessary activities from daily living. It used to be some generations back that the modern urban resident could

not abide a hotel that did not have a room with a private toilet. In the 1960s the lament you heard was "You mean the room doesn't have a T.V. set?" We suspect this lament will soon be replaced with still another, "You mean you don't have a room with a computer terminal?" We should emphasize in concluding this discussion that changes in the physical environment that impact on social roles and consequent place-identity cognitions go well beyond just advances in modern technology. Demographic changes in neighborhoods, environmental pollution, crime in the streets, urban decay, new land uses to meet a changing corporate economy, all of these and others may lead to changes in settings that require new dimensions in social roles, the consequences of both being a changing place-identity.

We neither wish to imply or pretend that we know very much of the structure involved either within or between the cognitive clusters that make up place-identity. We do know one thing based on our own introspections. Our experiences, related either in time, place, or because they have some perceived meaningful relationship to each other, do become associated as cognitions in the apperceptive mass of past events that characterize the cognitive world of each of us. Insofar as place-identity is concerned we have no doubt that the "clustering" and "relating" just described is no less true for our physical world socialization and experience than any other kinds of experiences that define the individual's existence, e.g., social, cultural, etc.

It would seem, therefore, that the very nature of how urban settings become functionally related to each other in the daily life of the person, to the point that they actually overlap, suggests that these settings develop and are represented in the place-identity of the urban dweller as inextricably related clusters of cognitions. This is quite understandable if one considers that, for example, the

breadwinner of a family, often brings his or her work home--including objects--so his or her "den" at home becomes a second office; and vice-versa. An employment setting may be to some degree a second "home" for some employees, given how they decorate it, how much time they spend there and so on. Desirable neighborhoods in which there is an "open door" policy between house or apartment and the neighborhood setting also suggest interrelationships between the cluster of cognition of home and those of the neighborhood. Perhaps most patent in this respect, but also quite important in the integration of clusters of place-identity cognitions in an urban setting, IS the use of public spaces.

The neighborhood, local transportation routes, major shopping areas, approaches to and from business districts, all serve to relate various other physical settings such as the household and work place to each other. Each of us is aware that changing one's residence either within an urban setting or to another such setting, invariably involves establishing an appropriate geographical pattern of loci for the household, workplace, school, neighborhood, and other settings, so that the activities of all family members life can take place in a meaningful way. This grouping of clusters of cognitions reflecting the geographical integration of urban life begins early in the childhood of the urban dweller, and serves as an "environmental past" against which new physical setting relationships can be compared and evaluated.

The final structural property of place-identity we wish to consider briefly concerns the person's level of conscious awareness of the nature of this identity. Although in more than a few places in this paper we alluded to how much of the individual's environmental past and present he can tell us about, there can be little question that there is far, far more that he cannot bring to consciousness. Ostensibly the easiest thing is to describe some of the physical properties of

settings, and if they are being used repeatedly and routinely the person may have a considerable bank of "awareness information" to draw upon. The cluster of cognitions he presents may be rather detailed, covering items of why, where, when, and who uses it, what else he knows about it and what it means to him. This may include its assets and its limitations. Of course over time, and particularly when the setting is no longer relevant to the person and he no longer uses it, the complexity and detail of other aspects of modern urban life will demand that much of this knowledge recede from consciousness.

However, this is only part of the story of the inaccessability of place-identity cognitions. The fact is that many cognitions of physical places and spaces are "recorded" but without the person being aware of the sources. Furthermore, there may be awareness in the form of feelings and vague underlying conceptions about places and spaces, but no words available to the person to describe these cognitions. "The place has such a great ambience but I can't pin down just what it is and why it feels this way." The consciousness dimension of place-identity, not unlike self-identity itself is a difficult one to deal with. Many cognitions may enter consciousness that are <u>not</u> significant in establishing a place-identity for the person and are then quickly forgotten. Others may be very relevant but escape conscious awareness, except if the context is a traumatic one in which dysfunction either of the person, the space, or both occur.

That a great deal in the learning and using of physical settings that is related to place-identity is not available to the consciousness of the person should come as no surprise. It is important to remember that in the context of our daily lives, it is social interaction and social process that dominate the consciousness of the individual--and this is true even when he is alone. Even in our ruminations and

fantasies, the grist for the mill of consciousness and reflection are other people and their activities in relation to our own. Physical settings are necessary and instrumental, but clearly as a backdrop for the sociopsychological purposes and activities of the person. In effect we learn to use and react to physical settings with very little conscious thought.

SOME EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this final section of my presentation I will consider some empirical and theoretical implications that follow from our previous analysis of place-identity in an urban setting. I have alluded to some of these in the above discussion and, because of time constraints, at best I can only give each of them the briefest consideration in the discussion that follows..

You may rightly and properly think at this point that we will have to truly improve our methodology to do full justice to the clusters of space related cognitions that define the person's self-identity in terms of his physical world. But from an empirical research point of view, this really doesn't explain why we haven't scratched the surface as yet in probing cognitions with our existing methodology. One implication of the present analysis of place-identity is that we are not doing enough as well as the right kind of cognitive research of places and spaces in urban settings. The contributions of Lynch and others focused on cognitive mapping should not be underestimated, but we need to ask much more about the images, definitions, and meanings that urban residents attribute to the urban scene as a

whole and to the various specific settings which organize and structure their day-to-day lives. There are cognitions of past and present settings that are available to consciousness, but to date we have been reluctant to contend with the quantity and complexity of qualitative data that may ensue from an open-ended methodological approach to place-identity. Undoubtedly it would be tedious and painstaking, but the possibilities of better understanding individual place identity and the impact of the city on the person in other respects are considerable. That we need a methodology that goes beyond what can be verbalized and/or is available to consciousness goes without saying. Surely some of the most interesting if not important insights into place-identity in the city may well emerge. It may be necessary to track city dwellers for long periods of time; or to photograph events in a given setting in detail; or even to hypnotize individuals to tell what they "know" about their spaces and places that they can't remember, or, if they do, about which they cannot verbalize easily.

From a theoretical point of view our conception of place-identity implies much more than the need for a methodologically relevant empirical research program. If we consider the narrower and more focused definition of place identity, which we referred to early in our paper as <u>place-belongingness,</u> a number of such implications emerge. The person's sense of place-belongingness may indeed be phenomenal in nature, but its origin may well be a function of learning <u>many</u> basic social roles in the <u>same</u> physical setting, such as the household, under conditions in which the agents of socialization and the physical settings provide far more satisfactions than frustrations. One could argue that the very early shaping of the person's self-identity in a physical context that satisfies the socialization process in this respect, may indeed set the stage for the development of some degree of place belongingness in relation to this physical context.

Of course, the matter cannot be that simple since there are always the questions of what is the quality of the physical setting on the one hand, and perhaps more importantly what is the quality of the defined social relationships and activities that go on in this context, on the other.

The issue of whether the household physical setting and its parental-child context will have positive consequence for the child's place-identity clearly goes far beyond the issue of place-belongingness. We do not deny the latter phenomenon, but simply want to stress the greater importance of asking whether the qualities of the physical setting and its social context can interact so that positively valenced clusters of cognitions about the home setting emerge. If this indeed is the case, then the self-identity development of the individual is maintained and supported by these cognitions, and not by fears, threats, and other negative aspects of the household that should be avoided. Whether it is a case of place-belongingness or positively valenced cognitions of their physical world, it is evident that this indeed does occur among many lower class and/or ethnically disadvantaged groups living in clearly substandard physical settings. We have already suggested that more is involved in the significance of the household in place-identity development than the fact that so many social roles are learned in this context by the child. The quality of a physical setting has to be guaged in relation to the quality of the parent-child relationships that exist; and vice-versa.

Our theoretical analysis of urban place-identity allows us to derive still another possibility. The linkages or interconnectedness of the various physical settings that circumscribe our daily existence, immediately suggest that a poor or inadequate home setting may be compensated for by the superior quality of such other settings as the school, the neighborhood, and even existing recreational settings. Such compensation, let us say in a school or neighborhood setting, may

indeed vitiate to some degree the negative effects of an undesirable physical home setting. In part this may be a function of the fact that even for a child, the diversity and complexity of urban life allows the child to learn his social roles in contexts other than the household. To the extent that the neighborhood, school, and play areas allow the child to develop environmental skills of understanding, competence, and resourcefulness, these may be applied to the household setting such that the negative impact of the latter is reduced. We are talking here about the difficulties of privacy, crowding, personal space, and territoriality in the home, since under substandard conditions these often emerge as problems in that context.

You may at this point think that contrary to the conceptualization of place identity developed here, I have unduly stressed the formative years, particularly in the household setting. You would be right. Whether the emphasis is on place-belongingness or a more broadly conceived place-identity, the fact is that the various adult roles learned by the individual such as occupation, husband, father, and others and their relevant spaces and places may indeed have their own strong consequences on the place-identity of the person. Place-belongingness developed in the formative years of the life-cycle may recede in strength and be replaced with strong emotional attachments to these later settings. We repeat a point made earlier. The child who then becomes a parent rearing his own children in a household setting and neighborhood over a lengthy period of time, may now feel strong emotional attachments to the space and place that helped define the self-identity of his children. Learning new roles is not limited to the formative years, nor is the satisfactions to be derived from playing such roles if indeed they have been successfully acquired.

We would like to shift our emphasis now to place-belongingness on a larger

scale, namely, for the city itself. There can be no question that strong emotional attachments to the household and/or a neighborhood, or even to the college setting or work setting do in fact occur. In both the college setting and the work setting, many new roles may be learned and related satisfactions derived so that strong place-belongingness may result. However, given the increasing urbanization of modern life, it is possible to hypothesize that the strong and powerful place-belongingness that characterized traditional family life is far less likely to occur except in rural or isolated, small communities. If rural or small town living once involved generations of the same family living together and successively in the same household, and supporting itself through a continuing family effort in farming or the family business, then intense place-belongingness of family members in such a context was indeed the case. In this sense place-belongingness and place-identity as we defined it here may well be interchangeable. In highly traditional nuclear families that remained geographically rooted to the same narrowly circumscribed physical world one generation after the next, the cognitive clusters of this world are indeed limited to a far less complex, smaller number of highly overlapping physical settings. Family life, economic productivity, education, religious life were all part of the same tightly woven fabric of rural or small town life, in which stability rather than change was typical.

Urban life, of course, has changed all this. Modern technology, increases in population, and the emergence of national and transnational corporations and industries has "decentralized" family life, its economic base, and its relationships to physical settings. It is no exaggeration to say that the new descriptive phrases for modern family life emphasize change, dispersion, and temporariness. Whether in the city or the suburbs, family life

still reveals far, far more "decentralization" or centripetal effects. If we add to the influences of a changing economy and increasing technology those of divorce, two career families, and shared custody of children of divorced parents, then it is evident that this decentralization is being intensified. Surely, the meaning of spaces and places in the development of the person's self-identity must now be viewed in these new terms.

The variability, complexity, and diversity of the urban social and physical worlds that we have emphasized all through this paper, suggests that perhaps what we ought to concern ourselves with is a place-belongingness for city life itself, and in particular the city in which the person has lived for an extended period of time. Rather than the general term place-belongingness it might be more appropriate to speak of an "urban place identity," which can be defined as a person's strong preference for living in urban settings because the various roles he has learned, the environmental skills that he has developed, the satisfactions he derived from his work, family life, and recreation, and the meanings and understandings he has of his physical world, were and continue to be derived from his day-to-day interactions with the urban built environment.

We remind you that the socialization of the person into his urban physical world carries with it not only clusters of cognitions of a variety of complex physical settings, but also skills for understanding them, using them, and skills in being resourceful if they need to be changed. The individual as a result, is not only able to manage his physical environment, but he learns to deal with its unpredictability, its rapidity of change, and, above all, with its many problems. Whether it is noise, poor transportation, blackouts, street crime,

bureaucratic physical settings, the urban dweller has learned much that prepares him for urban life. For him, crowding, invasions of personal space, or privacy are challenges he has learned to meet, and indeed to profit from.

He identifies with urban life not simply because he has the skills to cope with its specialized complex physical settings. It truly must be rooted in the fact that so many other aspects of his self-identity such as his occupation, his social class, his ethnic background, his various roles in the family, and even his age are intimately tied to the sociocultural characteristics of urban life, and therefore to their supporting physical settings. For many ethnic and social class groups, urban place-identity is rooted in the very nature of the physical world that defines the urban existence for these groups. Thus, for minority group members, the isolation of their particular turf or territority, with the possibility to be anonymous in the rest of the city but with the capacity to be anonymous in the rest of the city when one leaves that territory, transforms the meaning of density and isolation of urban life into very positive features. Similarly, it is important to stress that many occupations and professions have been shaped by and have grown in number as a consequence of the increasing numbers and population size of urban settings. The result, of course, is that the practice of these occupations and professions by way of available clients, services, and facilities--not to mention the economics involved--depends heavily on the practitioner or professional defining his occupational role and its physical context in urban terms. The occupational identity--and therefore the place-identity--of the modern criminal lawyer or brain surgeon, or even industrial computer expert, must necessarily include clusters of cognitions of urban requirements.

It should be understood that urban place identity, conceived in positive terms as a strong preference for city life, is certainly not true of all city dwellers. That's an empirical question that must be answered by research. It is important to stress that poorly learned environmental skills, less than adequate role learning and satisfactions, as well as unique and persistent difficulties with given physical settings, may lead to a negative urban place-identity. In this case, the valences of clusters of physical world related cognitions of the person's place-identity are predominantly negative. Furthermore, our conceptual analysis suggests that at different points of the life-cycle with changes in age, sex, occupational and familial roles and/or as a result of radical changes in the physical world of the person--whether physical disasters or demographic changes--the valence of urban place-identity itself may shift from positive to somewhat less positive or even negative, or vice-versa..

We come now to a final derivation from our conceptualization of place identity in relation to urban settings. Modern self-identity theory stresses the importance of the individual's social roles, social group memberships, and still other demographic characteristics as a basis for the formation and development of this identity. Yet, many if not all of these social attributes not only distinguish individuals in the same society in terms of their socio-functional status and expected activities and rewards, but by definition they require appropriate variations in physical settings to match these differences in social roles and social attributes. Perhaps the most obvious example is sex differences in which settings for men and women vary as a function of role differences, biological differences and, unfortunately, even social status differences--the civil rights movement notwithstanding.

What this means of course is that cognitive clusters for men and women respectively will vary insofar, let us say, as the household setting and certainly the workplace is concerned. Differences in sex role lead to both actual differences in the physical setting as well as perceived differences. If you accept this relatively obvious point for other roles as well as the sex role, then other derivations are in order.

First, it should be evident that both the differences in social roles and their consequences in differences in space use, meaning, and definition, have important consequences for other aspects of place-identity development of the person. Any other of the major person/physical space relationships, such as privacy and crowding that serve as a nexus for many urban problems, must necessarily reflect differences in the response to these problems as a function of role differences. The norms, strategies, and conceptions of privacy, for example, between men and women in urban settings undoubtedly differ in these respects although data are sparse to say the least.

It seems platitudinous to mention this next point, but again obviousness is no excuse for our lack of systematic research. Difference between lower class and middle class wage earners in dealing with frustrations and conflicts outside the home setting--call it the physical persuasion vs. the social persuasion approach--suggests that in matters dealing with crowding, stress, invasions of privacy and/or personal space or territory, the conceptions, norms, and strategies are quite different for the two social class groups. It is not difficult to give many, many more such examples.

Carrying our analysis further, it also follows that social role distinctions would have consequences in place-identity cognitions insofar as the environmental skills learned by the individual is concerned. We are again referring to environmental understanding, environmental competence, and environmental resourcefulness. We would expect differences, for example, between men and women not only in the very nature of the skills they develop but also in the effectiveness of those skills in relation to different physical settings. These skills, of course, are themselves subject to variation and change as we move through the life cycle and in relation to the nature and direction of changes that occur in the various interrelated physical settings of urban life. Nothing is more apparent in this respect than what happens to the environmental skills of the elderly.

The significances of social roles and social attributes in defining self-identity, and therefore in shaping the place-identity of the person, suggest that it is not simply urban place identity that must be identified, but specific types of urban place identities as well. To be sure all urban residents who indeed identify with urban life share similar if not the same relevant cognitions, but it is no less true that because of role distinction as well as other differences in social attributes, they also differ, and not in any small degree, in these cognitions.

Let me now conclude quickly. I am not sure that place-identity is a theoretically valid conception as we have defined it, but that really doesn't matter at this stage in the "state of the art" of environmental psychology. What matters now is its heuristic value, and in this respect it demands attention. Both modern conceptions of self-identity theory and the very problems that dominate urban life--crowding, personal space, privacy-- all cry out for a concept of place-identity defined in broad cognitive terms.

What could be more obvious than the fact that physical space as well as social space defines our existence every moment of the day or that territoriality or personal space are matters that relate directly to establishing, protecting, and maintaining a self-identity. Of course, the investigation of place-identity as we have defined it here is not an easy task. But then again that is true of all significant and complex psychological conceptions. Surely we cannot turn away from it if we expect to better understand the nature and process by which individuals in a complex urban setting interact and relate to that setting.

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